

The Puget Sound Economy

Puget Sound Facts

Puget Sound is part of the natural environment that attracts people to the region. The Sound helps drive \$20 billion in economic activities.



Orcas in Puget Sound

Population – Approximately 4.1 million people live in the 12 counties bordering Puget Sound. This figure includes about 1.5 million who live in the 90 cities and towns that directly border the Sound.

Fishing – The recreation fishery in Puget Sound is valued conservatively at \$10 million a year. According to a 1998 University of Washington survey, households in Western Washington are willing to pay \$8 billion over 20 years to increase the Sound's migratory salmon population by 50 percent.

Shellfish – Washington is the largest producer of farmed shellfish in the United States and is a leading producer of naturally-growing shellfish. A majority of this product comes from Puget Sound

- The average annual commercial value for Puget Sound crab, shrimp, mussel, oyster, geoduck and other clams is \$59.3 million (This includes treaty, non-treaty, commercial and aquatic farm production.)
- Recreational value of shellfishing is valued conservatively at \$19.2 million per year.

Tourism – The Puget Sound area provides \$5.2 billion in tourism revenue, including 68,000 tourism-related jobs and \$2 billion in income.

Boating – Boating is a major recreational activity. The National Marine Manufacturers Association rates Washington State 10th in the 50 states for \$464 million in combined boat, motor, trailer, and accessory purchases. There are:

- 244 marinas with 39,400 moorage slips
- Another 331 launch sites for smaller boats.
- About 180,000 boats that must be registered
- Thousands more smaller boats, rafts, kayaks, and canoes

Recreation – About 390,000 people participate in recreation activities in the waters or on the beaches of Puget Sound, at least once a year. These activities include fishing, swimming, boating, rafting, kayaking, and other water sports. Puget Sound has:

- 2,800 square miles of inland marine waters
- 2,500 miles of shoreline
- 2.1 million acres of state-owned submerged saltwater lands
- 200 different fish species
- 100 sea bird species
- 26 types of marine mammals. In 2003, 82 resident orca whales provided views for 80 whale watching boats.

There are 38 state parks and 8 national parks, wildlife refuges, forests and other uses that border Puget Sound. Local governments provide another 16 regional parks along the Sound.

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Lifestyle - People forego higher wages in order to live here. This is especially true of professions where remote teleworking is possible. Wages average 3% higher for accountants and 11% higher for lawyers elsewhere in the country.

We can afford to protect Puget Sound

Washington business –There are approximately 142,000 companies providing 1.8 million jobs with an annual payroll of \$79.7 billion. This is about 77 percent of state employment. The Puget Sound’s gross business income is \$130 billion a year.

Trade – The nexus of Puget Sound, U.S. Interstates 5 and 90, the railroad system and the University of Washington are the primary drivers for the current level of economic activity. Together, the ports of Seattle and Tacoma make the Sound the second largest U.S. harbor for container traffic, including:

- \$14 billion in state-originated exports that pass through Puget Sound ports.
- 62.58 million metric tons of cargo that passes through Puget Sound ports.
- The water-based activities of the Port of Seattle alone provide 31,000 jobs and \$1.9 billion in income.

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